

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 AF-10

AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-11 FEA-02

FPC-01 H-03 INT-08 L-03 NSC-07 PM-07 SCI-06 SS-20

STR-08 TRSE-00 IO-14 DRC-01 /190 W

----- 025980

R 151200Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1006

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 1347

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIM, CE

SUBJ: CONTINUING GSL EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ARAB AID

REF: KUWAIT 1776

1. IN MONTHLY PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 13, DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MDFA) JAYAKODY SAID GSL EDUCATION MINISTER MAHMUD AND CABINET SECRETARY ALIF (BOTH MUSLIMS) ARE TO UNDERTAKE GOODWILL MISSIONS TO SEVERAL MIDDLE EAST OIL-PRODUCING NATIONS: LIBYA, EGYPT, KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, DUBAI, AND ABU DHABI. JAYAKODY WAS ASKED WHETHER MAHMUD'S PURPOSE WOULD BE TO ARRANGE LOANS OR OTHER CONCESSIONAL ASSISTANCE (TO COMPENSATE FOR NEAR DISASTROUS IMPACT OF TRIPLED CRUDE PRICES ON SRI LANKAS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS). PRESS QUOTED JAYAKODY AS SAYING HE HAD NO INDICATIONS TO THAT EFFECT, BUT THAT "WE HOPE DR MAHMUD'S GOODWILL MISSION WILL OPEN DOOR TO SUCH POSSIBILITIES".

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2. MDFA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR BILATERAL ECONOMIC

AFFAIRS TOLD EMBASSY THAT MAHMUD IS VISITING LISTED AND POSSIBLY OTHER OIL-PRODUCING STATES AS PRIME MINISTERS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND WOULD PRESENT LETTERS FROM HER TO CHIEFS OF STATE REQUESTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SRI LANKA.

3. CEYLON DAILY NEWS ARTICLE REPORTING JAYAKODY'S REMARKS ALSO MENTIONED THAT EXTERNAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR DR AUSTIN FERNANDO (NOW AT PARIS AID GROUP MEETING) HAD BEEN IN KUWAIT FOR DISCUSSIONS ON "INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES TO CHANNEL FUNDS PROMISED BY OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES". FERNANDO'S DEPUTY CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY THAT DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO MEETING DESCRIBED REFTTEL.

4. COMMENT: MDFA OFFICIAL PREDICTABLY EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT RESULT WOULD COME FROM MAHMUD'S SOMEWHAT REDUNDANT TOUR (GSL OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN VISITING ARAB CAPITALS SINCE DEC). TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, SRI LANKAS EFFORTS SO FAR TO OBTAIN SPECIAL EMERGENCY HELP FROM ARABS BASED ON CEYLONESE POLITICAL SUPPORT AND URGENT ECONOMIC NEED HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED. FERNANDO'S PARTICIPATION IN KUWAIT MEETING APPEARS TO BE MORE DOWN-TO-EARTH EFFORT TO KEEP SRI LANKA NEAR HEAD OF QUEUE FOR MORE REGULAR AND LONGER-RANGE ASSISTANCE THAT ARABS ARE APPARENTLY ORGANIZING, ALBEIT VERY SLOWLY.
VAN HOLLEN

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Message Attributes

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